

COMMITTEES:

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
GOVERNMENT REFORM

CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
MIDDLE EAST  
AND CENTRAL ASIA

VICE CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
WESTERN HEMISPHERE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
WELLNESS AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

**ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**  
18TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

2160 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
☐ WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0918  
(202) 225-3931  
FAX: (202) 225-5620

☐ DISTRICT OFFICE:  
9210 SUNSET DRIVE  
SUITE 100  
MIAMI, FL 33173  
(305) 275-1800  
FAX: (305) 275-1801

**Statement by Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Chair**  
**Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia**  
**for International Relations Committee Hearing on**  
**9/11 Commission Recommendations**  
**August 24, 2004**

With the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on our Nation, we learned, to our horror, that no one is immune from the gross manifestations of terrorism. As the Commission's report described, the United States became a "nation transformed."

On that day, we were surprised, grasped by the power of evil. Now, we are informed, ready to defeat this evil.

We understand that the challenge before us is a deeply entrenched one. We must work to make certain that nothing of this nature ever happens again. Defeating all terrorist organizations of global reach and pre-empting the proliferation of new terrorist threats and weapons, is a central component of this struggle.

The 9/11 Commission report addresses these strategic considerations with recommendations ranging from:

- the need for the U.S. Government to promote American values, define what the message is and what we stand for;
- to the need for the U.S. to "engage other nations in developing a comprehensive coalition strategy against Islamist terrorism;"
- to recommending that a "comprehensive U.S. strategy to counter terrorism should include economic policies that encourage development, more open societies and opportunities for people to improve the lives of their families and to enhance prospects for their children's future."

While most recently outlined in the Commissions report, the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia which I Chair, has been focusing on such items throughout this Congress, addressing not just state-sponsors and existing terrorist sanctuaries as Iran, Syria, and Afghanistan, but also examining Islamic extremism and terrorist activity in Central Asia, for potential threats.

We have held numerous sessions, exerted oversight over, and developed legislative items to address other critical issues such as:

- proliferation and terrorist pursuit of unconventional weapons programs, particularly, the implications of Iran's nuclear efforts;
- as well as terrorist financing, with special emphasis on Saudi Arabia.

We have intensified our efforts in preventing the spread of Islamist terrorism through the redirection of assistance toward greater investments in educational and political/economic reform, working with the Administration to better define, strengthen, and expand the Middle East Partnership Initiative, the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative, and the efforts toward a Middle East Free Trade Area.

Within this context, I would like to ask our distinguished guests a series of questions relating to initiatives I have been working on for inclusion in future 9/11 legislation:

- What recommendations do you have for specific programs within the existing initiatives that would help us win hearts and minds in the Muslim world? How can we further encourage and build on the development of the many nascent democratic institutions that are emerging throughout the region?
- Would you agree on the need to commend the people and governments of such countries as Jordan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and Morocco, for their efforts toward political and economic liberalization?
- Do you see this as part of a dual strategy— that is, one of cooperation and assistance to those embarking on concrete verifiable reforms, while holding accountable those, such as Saudi Arabia, who ignore the needs and universal liberties of their own people?

With respect to terrorist sanctuaries and global partnerships to address the terrorism threat:

- Would you support amending the Export Administration Act to mandate determinations and punitive measures for countries serving as terrorist sanctuaries?
- Would you support the creation of a Terrorist Interdiction Initiative out of the Department of State, to establish bilateral operational agreements and global partnerships to interdict terrorists and their weapons; create regional terrorism centers; and establish terrorism prevention teams?
- What is the appropriate role of the State Department's Counterterrorism Office? Should this office maintain an Operational role, or should it primarily be tasked with negotiating access and cooperation?



- Do you believe that the Global Patterns of Terrorism report needs to be redefined to address existing and emerging terrorist sanctuaries that are not state-sponsors, as well as to further focus and report on terrorists' pursuit of WMD capabilities?

With respect to proliferation concerns...

- would you agree that the International Atomic Energy Agency should not be hampered in its work because of financial constraints? Would you agree that it should be removed from the deferred payment program and our assessments to the IAEA should be paid at the beginning of its calendar year?
- Could you elaborate on the Commission's recommendation calling for an expansion of the Proliferation Security Initiative?

Lastly, would you support calling for the U.S., in preparation for next year's NPT Review Conference, to seek support for the establishment of criteria to determine "need" and eligibility for nuclear power, in an effort to prevent such pariah states as Iran from manipulating the NPT and using dual-use technology to achieve nuclear weapons capability?

In closing, I would simply like to add that I have often seen the United States as a cause more than a nation. And now, that cause faces another foe— foes who seek our destruction and whose ideas are in direct conflict with ours.

However, with freedom as our beacon and justice as our instrument, we will defeat terrorism and those who would engage in its insanity.

I look forward to your testimony and again, thank you for serving our nation.